

VZCZCXYZ0016  
PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHGE #0363/01 1892049  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
P 082049Z JUL 09  
FM AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN  
TO RUCNCOM/EC CARICOM COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS PRIORITY 0630  
RUEHDG/AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO PRIORITY 1070  
RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7318  
INFO RHMFISS/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L GEORGETOWN 000363

SIPDIS

WHA/CAR - FORTIN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/07/2019

TAGS: [ECON](#) [GY](#) [PREL](#)

SUBJECT: CARICOM LEADERS TALK ABOUT PROGRESS ON INTEGRATION  
BUT PRODUCE LITTLE

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires, a.i. Karen L. Williams for reasons 1.  
4(b) and (d)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: The Conference of Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) met in Georgetown July 2-5 for lengthy discussions on numerous regional topics with a focus on hemispheric relations, the economic crisis, the free movement of peoples among member states and competing proposals for regional and sub-regional economic integration.

U.S.-specific topics included a "scheduled" meeting with President Obama in November; the new joint regional security initiative; and continuing/expanding security mechanisms established in 2007 for Cricket World Cup. Conversations on the margins of the conference revealed perceived racist conduct as a factor in CARICOM's silence on the Dominican Republic's application bid; and, though unmentioned in the final communique, a new deadline for defining next steps on integration. END SUMMARY

¶2. (SBU) The three day conference, which drew heads of government from 13 of 15 members (exceptions were Haiti and St. Kitts and Nevis), kicked off the chairmanship of Guyana President Bharrat Jagdeo of the Conference of Heads, which he will hold until passing off to Dominica in six months. In Jagdeo's remarks opening the conference he bluntly outlined the Caribbean's minimal 'weight' in the world as measured against population and economic impact and implored the region's governments to stand together in international fora to maximize the region's strength. He also lamented that some international financial institutions -- despite an opportunity to have an appropriately high-level representative meet with 15 heads of government -- offered to send 'inappropriately low' officials, which prompted Jagdeo to tell them, he claimed, "don't bother to come." An outline of other leaders' opening remarks and the text of the meeting's communique is available at [www.caricom.org/jsp/pressreleases/pres270](http://www.caricom.org/jsp/pressreleases/pres270) 09.

U.S-CARICOM RELATIONS/SECURITY

-----  
¶3. (C) The Communique noted anticipation of a summit "scheduled" with President Obama in November 2009 in Washington, DC, however neither CARICOM Assistant Secretary General Colin Granderson nor Guyana MFA Director Elizabeth Harper could explain how that specific date/place came to be part of the final document. Harper told the Charge that the notes for the final communique had said that the Caribbean looked forward to meeting with "senior U.S. counterparts" to crystalize specific discussion areas for an anticipated meeting with President Obama "later this year" but did not assign a month or city to that discussion.

¶4. (SBU) In other joint issues, the leaders agreed to pursue more U.S. pre-clearance travel facilities throughout the region to facilitate tourism and decided to reactivate the

Resource Mobilization Sub-Committee to better utilize President Obama,s pledge of USD30 million (now USD45 million) for developing security partnerships. The leaders also agreed to reactivate the security facilities established with the U.S. for Cricket World Cup 2007 and those for the 5th Summit Of the Americas for both the upcoming Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in Trinidad & Tobago this year and the ICC World 20/20 cricket tournament in 2010. They also agreed to proposals for for further implementation of two regional information programs for travel security ) CARICOM Travel Pass (CARIPASS) and the Advanced Passenger Information System (APIS) ) as well as a program for limiting the spread of small arms among violent criminal gangs.

#### FREE MOVEMENT OF PERSONS

-----

¶5. (SBU) Whereas previous CARICOM gatherings have focused on deportees from the U.S. or Canada, leaders in Georgetown vocalized exclusively on intra-CARICOM deportations. Relations between Barbados and several member states including Guyana have suffered due to several widely-reported cases of undocumented migrants to Barbados apprehended at night and forced to depart the island. Public comments during the opening ceremonies and on the margins of the conference decrying the treatment of migrants brought applause from heads, audiences and political pundits. By the end of the meetings, leaders reaffirmed their commitment to lawful migration throughout the region as envisioned under the Treaty of Chaguaramas and broadened some of the allowable migrant categories.

#### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & REGIONAL INTEGRATION

-----

¶6. (U) The heads of government established a Task Force on the global financial crisis to mobilize funds and develop proposals for stabilizing regional financial markets. The chair is President Jagdeo and membership includes the President of the Caribbean Development Bank and Director General of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States.

¶7. (SBU) Former Jamaican Prime Minister P.J. Patterson, speaking at the opening ceremony after receiving the Order of the Caribbean Community, warned that CARICOM,s credibility is deteriorating due to repeated failures by national governments to follow through with solemn pledges made at Heads meetings, particularly on economic development and regional integration. He noted the dangers of member states abandoning their commitment to regional integration and endangering progress by forming alliances with other regions -- an indirect reference to the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas (ALBA).

¶8. (SBU) Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda Baldwin Spencer, in remarks just prior to Patterson, noted ALBA,s benefits for his country and others (drawing limited applause from anyone except St. Vincent and the Grenadines PM Ralph Gonsalves, the Venezuelan and Cuban diplomats and Guyana People's Progressive Party Secretary General Donald Ramotar) and asserted that it is not a threat to CARICOM,s Single Market & Economy (CSME) or integration efforts by the Organization of East Caribbean States.

¶9. (C) Although not noted in the final communique, delegation members said that a February 2010 deadline had been set for establishing concrete next steps on implementing a common single market and that "serious" discussion was underway to include in those steps the allocation of more authority for high-level Secretariat officials in the implementation process.

#### GUYANA-VENEZUELA BORDER DISPUTE

-----

¶10. (SBU) Heads of government re-affirmed their support for Guyana,s territorial integrity and noted the still pending consultations between the Government of Guyana and the Government of Venezuela over identifying a Special Representative to the Good Offices Process under UN-auspices. This action has been pending for two years.

## CARICOM STRUCTURE

¶11. (U) Heads of government decided to incorporate the Caribbean Regional Negotiating Machinery (CRNM) into the CARICOM Secretariat as the Office of Trade Negotiations; Ambassador Gail Mathurin of Jamaica will direct this new office.

## DOMINICAN REPUBLIC MEMBERSHIP

¶12. (C) Discussion of the Dominican Republic's membership application was reportedly non-existent during the official meetings and inquiries to delegates on the margins yielded no information. However, CARICOM Secretary General Edwin Carrington angrily told the Canadian High Commissioner to Guyana in a private meeting that the DR's application would move very slowly through the process because of the DR's "racist" attitudes. The High Commissioner said Carrington told him that the DR's application would never be seen favorably so long as the DR "couldn't seat a black man as their lead representative at meetings whenever a white man was also on the DR delegation."

## COMMENT

¶13. (C) President Jagdeo had asserted before the conference that he would push through meaningful steps on integration. Despite integration discussions purportedly dominating the meeting (and causing the sessions to run until 10 and 11 at night), the action decided upon -- setting a February deadline for next steps -- didn't even make it into the communique. The February date is purportedly linked to the completion of (another) study on a way forward on integration. Perhaps the lack of a statement is an acknowledgement by the leaders that the region would greet with sarcasm the announcement of another study and yet another deadline. The rest of the list of 'actions' -- while including a number of 'low-hanging fruit' such as the broadening of immigrant categories, the continuation of security systems set up for CWC and the establishment of committees -- hold few actual items of progress. END COMMENT

Williams